

2013 Library District Task Force
September 23, 2013
2:00 p.m.
Go To Meeting Session

MEMBERS

Mike Collins, John Conlan, Kim Crowley, Nanette Gilbertson, Susan Gregory, Jane Hamman, Ed Lieser, and Marilyn Trosper.

STAFF

Sarah McHugh, Jennie Stapp and Marlys Stark.

INTRODUCTION AND CHARGE FOR TASK FORCE:

The members summarized their interest and experience with districts and Jennie briefly explained the purpose behind forming the task force which is to take a proactive look at existing library district legislation in order to ensure that the legislation allows all libraries that wish to form districts to do so and to make the overall creation and administration of districts easier. There will be an online Google group set up for discussions.

The group needs to reach a consensus. MSL will not carry any actual legislation or ask MLA to carry any that doesn't have the full support of the library community. The proposal must benefit or at least be neutral for all libraries.

The proposed timeline will be the orientation today, regular discussions until early November via the Google group with the next meeting in early November. That meeting will likely be a face to face meeting. Members need to share appropriate legislation from neighboring states, knowledge regarding existing districts, roles of trustees and local government and so on and use all that to propose changes to the current statute.

Proposed changes will be discussed in November along with reviewing ways to strengthen the process of creating library districts and the kinds of assistance MSL can provide. Recommendations to the state librarian will then be drafted and staff input will be sought. The draft will be submitted to the commission in December. After the commission has approved it the draft will go out to the libraries and counties for their buy-in and a final report will be submitted to MSL. If the draft is approved, it will be included in the planning stages of the next EPP.

The previous task force brought legislation which enabled the creation of library districts which didn't pass the first session but did pass in 2001. The hope was to encourage the sharing of staff and resources. There is five or

six different type of districts in place in western Montana but no multi-county districts as was hoped for. There are five public library districts and one multi-jurisdictional district. **Members asked for a link to the different types of library governance** which include free public, library district, interlocal agreements, multi-jurisdictional.

Immediate issues to consider would include the legal system, accounting systems, insurance for employees and many others. The consulting website does have guides for libraries that are considering forming library districts include a handbooks and a guide to the first year.

The first week the group will be opened up to suggestions from all participants. MSL will not drive the discussion but rather just compile recommendations. Further discussion will then decide what to move forward with.

Members will be notified when the next meeting is scheduled.